

# THE ADVOCATE

## Why I Come To Work

by Ricky Weaver, Youth Development Specialist

I'm **Ricky Weaver** and I work at the Oak Hill Youth Center as a Youth Development Specialist (YDS). I've been in this field for more than 18-years, and I've seen the things that some of these kids go through. Being a YDS is a very challenging position. We have to manage kids from all types of backgrounds and situations, mostly in terms of why they are now under the supervision of DYRS. In order to do what I do you must have a high level of commitment to our youth. I take pride in what I do because I know it works, and I can see that the new approach we are using for these young scholars is having a positive impact. As a veteran of this work I have some life knowledge and experiences to share with the youth to help improve their lives. Whatever brought them here, people easily forget the fact that they are still kids on the inside. In fact, many of them never had a real childhood or have an idea of what it is to be a child or teenager. That's part of the reason why we're here, to remind our youth that they can be safe and productive citizens in our community.



## Ward 8 Unit Now Located in Anacostia

Case Managers, with the Ward 8 Unit, recently moved from 450 H to their new offices at 2101 Martin Luther King Ave, SE. The Unit moved into the Anacostia community to better serve the youth and their families residing in the area. The building is located in front of The Big Chair and shares building space with the DC Lottery & Charitable Games Control Board.



## Singing at Sunrise—Harambee

Every morning, youth from all units gather in the auditorium to participate in a cheerful session of singing and dancing to kick off the day. Normally, the band and its singer/mc is comprised of youth from different units, however, on this occasion, teachers from Oak Hill Academy, DYRS Unit Managers and Youth Development Specialists began the day with a heartfelt Go-Go musical selection. These morning sessions will continue throughout the school year, so come and enjoy the experience that makes Harambee!

## Guess Who?

Can you guess the name of the DYRS employee standing to the right of an NBA superstar?



Answer: (left to right) Former NBA stars Michael Adams, Michael Jordan, and of course, our very own David J. Thomas, who was a standout football player at Boston College—back in the day! Way, way, back in the day!

